

Board of Health Report: November 2022

Substance Abuse and Prevention Division, Lowell Health Department

Massachusetts Collaborative for Action, Leadership, and Learning 3 (MassCALL3)

Devin Gilmore, Substance Use Prevention Grant Coordinator

Grant Updates

Devin continues writing a Strategic Prevention Plan (SPP) for the MassCALL3 grant. The SPP is a detailed plan of action to address particular variables found to increase risk for youth substance misuse in Lowell.

Mill City Prevention Network

Devin facilitated Mill City Prevention Network's Health Education Taskforce Meeting on October 13th at Butler Middle School. She is currently working with Butler's Health Teacher, Megan Curran, to plan a Professional Development Day for taskforce members.

Youth Health Assessment

Devin is working with professors from UMass Lowell's Social Psychology Department, as well as teachers from Lowell Middle Schools, to coordinate youth focus groups in the spring 2023 semester to be hosted in middle school health classes in Lowell. Data collected from these focus groups will be used in the MassCALL3 strategic planning process. Devin met with partners on October 19th for this project.

Drugfreegreaterlowell.org

Devin is a member of a small group of prevention providers meeting regularly to revise existing content, add new content, and streamline administration processes for the Drug Free Greater Lowell website.

Professional Development

- Devin began the virtual Breathe for Change Yoga and Mindfulness Teacher Training on October 8th and 9th. She and nine other youth-serving professionals in Lowell will complete 200 hours of training from October 2022 – March 2023.
- Devin attends weekly sessions of the Interaction Institute's virtual training series "Facilitative Leadership for Social Change." This seven-week curriculum prepares community leaders to facilitate socially transformative spaces in their work.

Other Updates

- Devin presented to parents at Sullivan Middle School on October 26th. The presentation introduced families to substance misuse prevention at school and instructed them on best practices to support prevention at home.
- Devin assisted other Health Department staff in planning and facilitating an Unwanted Medication and Sharps Disposal Day at Lowell Senior Center on October 29th.

Syringe Collection Program
Andres Gonzalez, Syringe Collection Program Coordinator

City Department and Community Partner Engagement:

- National Park Service
- Lowell Litter Krew
- Clean River Project
- Canal Cleaner
- MVRTA
- Heritage State Park
- Lowell Housing Authority
- Lowell Public Schools
- Lowell City Council
- Lowell Public Works
- Salvation Army
- Life Connection Center
- Mass Hire Youth Program
- UMass Lowell
- Trinity E.M.S.
- Middlesex County Superior Court
 - Mass DOT
 - Office of the City Manager
 - Lowell CO-OP
 - Lowell Street Department
 - Lowell Police Department
 - Lowell Parks Department

Meetings & Events Attended:

- 9/3/2022 East Pawtucketville Clean-up
- 9/10/2022 Upper Merrimack Sweep
- 9/13/2022 COET meeting
- 9/21/2022 Virtual Opioid Task Force Meeting
- 9/27/2022 COET meeting

Areas Proactively Swept for Discarded Syringes:

- Veteran's Way
- Gorham Street
- Dutton Street Bridge
- Riverfront Park
- Le Lachur Park
- Lowell Locks
- Eastern Canal Park
- Hunts Falls Bridge
- George Street
- Favor Street
- Rogers Street Bridge
- South Common Park
- North Common Park
- Thorndike Overpass
- Eastern Canal Park
- Concord River
- Point Park
- Bridge Street Park
- River Bike Path
- Lincoln Street
- Union Street

Syringe Collection Activity 2022

Total Number of...	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct (1-27)	Nov	Dec	Total
Discarded pick-up requests	4	8	23	19	18	9	34	36	11	15			177
Incoming calls for pick-up requests	12	12	32	28	22	11	20	31	16	23			188
Syringes picked-up while responding to <u>all</u> discarded pick-up requests	50	60	402	277	332	185	310	391	151	361			2,519
Syringes picked up during Community Clean-up Events	0	0	0	244	105	95	84	35	18	0			581
Syringes proactively picked-up while in the community	502	457	743	1128	909	670	1,252	1,694	1,330	1153			9,838
Hours proactively picking-up discarded syringes	48	51	74	70	49	32	78	68	66	69			607

Lowell Community Opioid Outreach Program (CO-OP) – **Overview**
Maricia Verma, Lowell CO-OP Supervisor
Lowell CO-OP Data: 2021 and 2022 Comparison

--	September 2021	September 2022	2021 Total	2022 Total
Total Encounters	153	180	2,347	1491
Unique Encounters	81	136	1187	954
Initial Interaction	22	68	346	293
OD Follow-Up	1	34	134	115
Section 35	0	3	35	10
Clinical Clients	70	77	771	652
Disseminate Narcan	75	88	780	335
SUD Treatment	38	22	294	298
Medical Treatment	0	9	100	144
Other Services	0	0	131	60
Misc. Outreach	154	155	1,499	818

Additional

- Maricia continues to supervise the day to day operation of the Lowell CO-OP, work with community partners, and provide coordination and guidance for more complex clinical clients.

Lowell Community Opioid Outreach Program (CO-OP) – **Youth Services**
Rhiannon Archambault, Youth Outreach Specialist

Lowell Community Opioid Outreach Program (CO-OP) – **Clinical Services**
Joseph Aniello, Clinical Recovery Specialist

Please note that Clinical Staff on the Lowell CO-OP are Joseph Aniello, Maricia Verma (CO-OP Supervisor), and Gianna Sandelli (Assistance Director of Outreach from Lowell House Addiction Treatment and Recovery).

Lowell CO-OP Clinical Data: 2021 and 2022 Comparison

--	September 2021	September 2022	Total 2021	Total 2022
Clinical Sessions	123	122	1,671	1106
Clinical Clients	70	77	775	652
Initial Interaction	20	35	178	165
Medical Treatment	16	9	280	218
Transportation	22	24	150	219
Housing	51	32	690	458
Financial	76	46	809	690
DCF	2	2	43	24
Other	20	34	408	222

Brief Client Case Example

This section will be used to share success stories of clients working with Lowell CO-OP's clinical staff. Success stories help to frame the work of the Lowell CO-OP, and adds context to the various needs and levels of support that Lowell CO-OP clients face as they work towards recovery

Joseph began working in with a disabled elderly homeless man in June of 2022. Joseph was able to place client in a shelter in Lawrence Massachusetts in August of 2022. Joseph continued working with client and was able to secure Massachusetts State Identification from the Registry of Motor Vehicles for client. Joseph was able to secure Department of Transitional Assistance for client. Joseph was able to secure birth certificate from Waltham clerk's office. Joseph completed Balance of State with client. Joseph was able to secure permanent housing at Pathfinders, a permanent supportive housing program for client in September of 2022. Joseph continues to assist client. Client is in action stage of recovery.

Youth Services Data

--	September 2021	September 2022	2021 Total	2022 Total
Youth Services Sessions	38	38	447	375
Engaged Youth Services Clients	12	16	147	98
SUD Treatment and Recovery Coordination	6	8	131	77
Healthcare Coordination	5	13	105	177
Housing Coordination	6	19	103	154

Youth Outreach Specialist (YOS) Update

- Rhiannon's clients continue to regularly engage with the Lowell CO-OP. Consistent engagement is essential for connecting individuals to services, especially for those who are homeless or have high-priority needs. Consistency can also improve rapport and communication with clients.
- Rhiannon utilizes technology as an effective tool for working with clients. Taking the time to teach clients how to use different forms of technology, software, and other applications can be an incredibly useful skill as many offices and services are moving toward offering virtual and telehealth-based services. This also benefits individuals who are not able to easily access transportation services to attend appointments in-person.

Addressing Challenges

Accessing services has shown to be difficult for many individuals, especially as a new client. Primary care physicians, housing programs, behavioral health, psychiatry, and other specialty care can see waitlist times of at least 6-18 months. This is a very big barrier for those who require intakes and medical evaluations to continue to receive financial benefits, assistance-based services, or simply maintaining their general mental and physical health. Excessively long waitlists can be stressful for those who are both housed and housing insecure, and meeting basic needs while homeless can prove to be difficult already.

Report completed by Gisela-Yeboah-Epidemiologist